

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMCONGEN DHANRAN
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
USLO RIYADH
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

UNCLAS MANAMA 1002

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS/ BEXP ECRE BA SA
SUBJECT: SAUDI/BAHRAIN CAUSEWAY: UPDATE

1. A NUMBER OF RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS HAVE REVEALED ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON THE PLANNING FOR THE SAUDI/BAHRAIN CAUSEWAY PROJECT. THE MAIN SOURCE FOR THIS INFORMATION IS A RECENT INTERVIEW BY MR. ALI MURAD, BAHRAIN DIRECTOR OF WORKS AND A MEMBER OF THE JOINT SAUDI/BAHRAIN TECHNICAL COMMITTEE. THE GOB EXPECTS THE CAUSEWAY TO BE COMPLETED IN LATE 1983 AND TO BE COPING DAILY WITH 29,000 PASSENGER CARS AND 2,6000 HEAVY TRUCKS BY THE END OF THIS CENTURY.

2. THE CAUSEWAY WILL CARRY FOUR LANES AND TOTAL 25 METERS IN WIDTH. IT WILL BE 18.5 KM FROM AZIZIYA IN SAUDI ARABIA TO THE BAHRAINI ISLAND OF UM-NASAN. ACROSS UM-NASAN WILL BE UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 MANAMA 01002 010701Z

2.3 KM. AN ADDITIONAL 3.2 KM CAUSEWAY WILL CONNECT UM-NASAN TO THE MAIN ISLAND OF BAHRAIN NEAR JASRA FOR A TOTAL PROJECT LENGTH OF 24 KM. MOST OF THE CAUSWAY FILL AREAS WILL BE IN SHALLOW WATERS 6-7 METERS DEEP AND THE FILL WILL BE TO FOUR METERS ABOVE AVERAGE HIGH TIDE. THE MAIN BRIDGE OVER THE SHIPPING CHANNEL WILL HAVE CLEARANCE OF 26.5 METERS. THREE OTHER BRIDGES PRIMARILY DESIGNED TO MINIMIZE EFFECTS ON WATER

FLOW, MARINE LIFE AND FISHING, WILL HAVE CLEARANCE OF 15.5 METERS.

3. THE JOINT COMMITTEES HAVE ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING TENDERING SCHEDULE:

- A. SOIL TEST BID (CORE DRILLING): LET IN JANUARY 1978 TO BE COMPLETED MAY 1978.
- B. ANALYSIS OF SOIL TEST RESULTS: FEBRUARY-JUNE 1978.
- C. PRE-QUALIFICATION OF CONTRACTORS: MARCH-JUNE 1978.
- D. PROJECT DOCUMENT PREPARATION: JUNE-AUGUST 1978.
- E. INVITATION TO TENDER: JANUARY 1979.
- F. TENDER STUDIES: FEBRUARY-MARCH 1979.
- G. CONTRACT AWARD: END OF APRIL 1979.

4. THERE WILL BE TWO SMALLER AND SEPARATE CONTRACTS FOR THE ACCESS ROADS ON EACH END OF THE CAUSEWAY PROJECT. STUDIES OF GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THESE PROJECTS WILL BE COMPLETED IN NOVEMBER 1978. BID DOCUMENTS SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR BIDDERS IN JANUARY 1979 WITH THE AWARD ANNOUNCED IN MAY 1979.

5. EMBASSY COMMENT: FROM INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE EMBASSY, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT PREPARATIONS ARE PROCEEDING WITH REASONABLE SPEED AND LITTLE DOUBT THAT THE CAUSEWAY WILL BE BUILT. THE PEAKING OF CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY IN BAHRAIN 4-5 MONTHS AGO APPEARS TO HAVE GIVEN SOME ADDED UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 MANAMA 01002 010701Z

IMPETUS TO THIS PROJECT WHICH THE GOB HOPES WILL MAINTAIN THE LOCAL CONSTRUCTION SECTOR OVER THE LOCAL MINI-RECESSION. THE EMBASSY WOULD NOT, HOWEVER, EXPECT THE TENDERING SCHEDULE TO HOLD FAST. IN PARTICULAR, IT APPEARS THAT INSUFFICIENT TIME HAS BEEN ALLOTTED FOR CONTRACTORS TO STUDY BID DOCUMENTS AND PREPARE BIDS FOR SUCH A LARGE PROJECT. WE WOULD ESTIMATE THE JOINT COMMITTEES WILL DO WELL TO MAKE THE FINAL AWARD OF CONTRACT BY SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1979. POWERS

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